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### Witness Swears He Saw Package Go to Thurmond

Ex-CIA agent Edwin P. Wilson, a preternaturally suspicious man, let his guard down once and was tricked into the FBI's hands. Now he is in jail, convicted of smuggling arms to Libya.

But when Wilson was wheeling and dealing in international intrigue, he never trusted his employees or partners. And that is why, after a lapse of several years, a former Wilson aide has emerged to claim that he saw money passed to Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.).

The Justice Department's investigation of the charges might understandably be a bit gingerly. Thurmond is the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, with power over the department. The investigation is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney E. Lawrence Barcella, who has earned a reputation as a tough, honest prosecutor.

Thurmond vigorously denies accepting any payment.

The witness said he was assigned by Wilson to spy on the middleman who allegedly passed the money.

He has told his story to Justice

Department investigators. Here are excerpts from a sworn statement obtained by my associate Dale Van Atta:

"I do swear I was in the employ of Edwin Paul Wilson. Wilson casually introduced me to [the middleman] at [Wilson's office in Washington, D.C.].

"[The middleman] would regularly come to [the Arlington, Va.] office of Delex International Inc. . . . a Wilson-sponsored company. On three separate occasions [a Delex employee] handed [the middleman] thick manila envelopes stuffed with money. It was a specific procedure that these envelopes, No. 10 size, were not marked in any way . . . .

"I witnessed [the employee] counting the money out on a [card] table . . . . They were particularly memorable episodes, because Delex had to have money in Riggs Bank on the same days to cover checks, and cash was counted out for that as well. To the best of my recollection, the amount I witnessed on each of these three occasions was \$10,000 even . . . .

"[The employee] handed these envelopes to [the middleman] . . . . Each time, soon after he left, I followed him, as I had been instructed to do by my employer, Wilson. He told me that whenever [the middleman] had an important delivery to make, I was to follow him and verify what [he] did with each delivery.

Wilson didn't trust any of the employees at Delex with his money . . . . I followed him in my own car."

The first time the middleman left, the witness lost him. But the next two times, he tailed him to the Capitol Hill Club, where the middleman met Thurmond, "whom I know by sight," the witness stated.

"On each occasion, shortly after they greeted each other and sat down," the sworn statement continues, "[the middleman] would pass the envelope during conversation to Sen. Strom Thurmond. It was done casually, and over the top of the table. Each time, Sen. Thurmond came alone. He accepted the envelope casually. Shortly after this each time, I left.

"As soon as it was feasible, I would place a call to Wilson whenever he was . . . at home . . . office or in London or somewhere else abroad. In the course of the conversation about other business matters, I would tell him I had followed [the middleman] from Delex International to the Capitol Hill Club, where the delivery was made to the 'same man.' I did not identify the senator or the nature of the delivery item on the phone."

The former Wilson aide has agreed to testify under penalty of perjury before a grand jury.

Thurmond told me he is ready to testify and deny the story.